CLAIMS:

1. A method of monitoring haemodynamic function in a human or animal subject, comprising monitoring changes in blood flow in a peripheral blood vessel or tissue bed, to provide an indication of changes in cardiac output.

2. A method in accordance with claim 1, comprising the steps of monitoring relative changes in blood flow, to provide indication of relative changes in cardiac output.

3. A method in accordance with claims 1 or 2, wherein the step of monitoring blood flow is carried out non-invasively.

4. A method in accordance with claims 1, 2 or 3, wherein the step of monitoring blood flow is carried out continuously.

5. A method in accordance with any one of the preceding claims comprising the further step of setting a predetermined limit for blood flow rate, which limit indicates an alarm condition should it be reached.

6. A method in accordance with any one of claims 2 to 5, comprising the step of pre-setting a base reference level for blood flow rate being the indicated flow level of the subject at rest before monitoring of haemodynamic function, or being an average flow level for the particular type of subject prior to monitoring of haemodynamic function.

7. A method in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, wherein the step of monitoring blood flow includes employing a device which produces a signal which varies with variations in blood flow, and processing the signal to produce an output providing an indication of variations in cardiac output.

8. A method in accordance with claim 7, wherein the step of processing the signal includes the step of modifying the signal by an adjustment factor obtained by a regression analysis of a human or animal subject.

9. A method in accordance with claim 7 or 8, wherein the step of processing the signal comprises

modifying the signal by an adjustment factor obtained from a co-variate parameter.

10. A method in accordance with claim 9, wherein the co-variate parameter is heart rate.

5     11. A method in accordance with any one of the preceding claims, comprising the step of applying the Doppler effect to monitor blood flow.

12. A method in accordance with any one of claims 1 to 10, comprising employing an infra-red blood flow sensor 10     (eg. pulse oximeter) to monitor blood flow.

13. A method in accordance with any one of claims 1 to 10, comprising employing an electromagnetic flow meter to monitor blood flow.

14. A method in accordance with any one of claims 1 15     to 10, comprising the step of employing a colour chart to monitor blood flow, and comparing the colour of a predetermined part of the subjects body with the colour chart to provide an indication of cardiac output.

15. A method in accordance with any one of claims 1 20     to 10, comprising the step of monitoring the colour of a part of the subjects body in order to monitor blood flow.

16. A method in accordance with any one of claims 6 to 13, wherein the signal is processed to produce a display which indicates the trend of the cardiac output.

25     17. A device for monitoring haemodyanmic function in a human or animal subject, comprising a blood flow monitor arranged to monitor changes in blood flow in a peripheral vessel or tissue bed, to provide an indication of changes in cardiac output.

30     18. A device in accordance with claim 17, wherein the blood flow monitor is arranged to monitor relative changes in blood flow, to provide an indication of relative changes in cardiac output.

19. A device in accordance with claim 17 or claim 35     18, further comprising a processing means for processing a signal from the blood flow monitor to produce an output signal which provides an indication of changes in cardiac

output.

20. A device in accordance with claim 19, wherein the processing means is arranged to adjust the signal by an adjustment factor obtained from regression analysis of

5   a human or animal subject.

21. A device in accordance with claim 19 or claim 20, the processing means being arranged to adjust the signal by an adjustment factor obtained from a co-variate.

22. A device in accordance with claim 21, wherein

10  the co-variate input is heart rate.

23. A device in accordance with any one of claims 17 to 22, wherein the blood flow monitor comprises a Doppler sensor adapted to monitor blood flow changes.

24. A device in accordance with any one of claims 17

15  to 22, wherein the blood flow monitor comprises an infra-red sensor such as a pulse oximeter adapted to monitor blood flow.

25. A device in accordance with any one of claims 17 to 22, wherein the blood flow monitor comprises an

20  electromagnetic flow meter.

26. A device in accordance with any one of claims 19 to 25, comprising a display, the processing means being arranged to control the display to give an indication of changes in the cardiac output in the subject.

25      27. A device in accordance with claim 26, being arranged to display a base reference value to compare with an indicated value during monitoring of haemodynamic function.

28. A device in accordance with claim 26 or claim

30  27, being arranged to display trend analysis for changes in cardiac output, showing the trend of the changes in cardiac output.

29. A device in accordance with any one of claims 17 to 22, wherein the blood flow monitor comprises a colour

35  chart can be compared with the colour of a predetermined part of the body of the subject.

30. A method in accordance with any one of claims 1

to 16, comprising the step of monitoring haemodynamic
function in a human or animal subject during anaesthesia.

    31. A method in accordance with any one of claims 1
to 16, comprising the step of monitoring haemodynamic
function during critical care.

    32. A method in accordance with any one of claims 1
to 16, comprising the step of monitoring haemodynamic
function during stress testing.

*Add A'*

*add B'*

*add S'*